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Letter dated 23 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I would like to extend my thanks to you for your initiative to respond to the challenge of how to take security sector reform forward within the United Nations. The wide-ranging nature of the topic necessitates a comprehensive and coordinated approach. The Security Council open debate which your Minister presided on 20 February was a useful step to move this agenda forward.

As you are aware, I had the honour to chair an Arria formula meeting on 16 February to allow experts from the field to share their experiences with members of the Council and others. The invited speakers were:

- Laurie Nathan from South Africa, the author of South Africa's Defence White Paper and an expert on local ownership
- Jeanette Eno from Sierra Leone, an expert on women, gender and conflict
- Hariyadi Wirawan from Indonesia, who is a member of Indonesia's Working Group on Intelligence Reform.

The meeting underlined a number of key points for the development of security sector reform. I sought to reflect these in my remarks summing up the meeting. These are annexed to this letter and I should be grateful if you could circulate this letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Emyr **Jones Parry**

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Annex to the letter dated 23 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Security sector reform: Arria formula meeting, 16 February 2007

Summary and recommendations

The United Kingdom hosted an Arria formula meeting on security sector reform on 16 February 2007. Invited speakers were Laurie Nathan from South Africa, the author of South Africa's Defence White Paper and an expert on local ownership; Jeanette Eno from Sierra Leone, an expert on women, gender and conflict; and Hariyadi Wirawan from Indonesia, who is a member of Indonesia's Working Group on Intelligence Reform.

The experiences recounted by the three experts from the field emphasized security as a basic human need, and security sector reform, centred on the needs of citizens, as the cornerstone of durable peace. While security sector reform plays an important role in post-conflict environments, it should not be limited to these arenas. Security sector reform is crucial at all stages of the post-conflict transition to development, from the immediate aftermath of a conflict, to the establishment of a democratic State, through to its consolidation and long-term stability.

Contributors agreed that there is no "one size fits all" solution to security sector reform. Security sector reform is contextual and must be adapted to reflect the realities of an individual country. Nevertheless, it should be possible to develop a set of core principles for security sector reform activity that can then be adapted to suit the context required. Strong, effective and accountable institutions must be developed that reflect the needs of the population. National ownership of the process must be assured. Without national ownership and the ability to build on ongoing local and regional processes security sector reform will not be effective and will lack legitimacy. Time should be taken to ensure full participation of all stakeholders in the reform process. Often, the process is as important as the policies ultimately produced.

Speakers also stressed the need for security sector reform to be a long-term commitment in which the international community can and should play a facilitating role. Implementation of the reform policies must also be considered. International organizations such as the United Nations, regional organizations, bilateral donors and the country concerned all have a responsibility for implementation. While national ownership is key, the wide-ranging nature of security sector reform necessitates a comprehensive and coordinated approach. The United Nations can perform this coordinating function and ensure that all commitments are met. It can also ensure that civil society and the local population are able to play a role in security sector reform development.

Speakers highlighted gender mainstreaming as essential for a successful security sector reform process. Women must be encouraged to participate in civilian security structures and support must be given to women's organizations at the national and district level. This ensures a level of public awareness and understanding of the need and purpose of security sector reform that is crucial to its

success. The inclusion of women in security sector reform processes should be monitored under the terms of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

Four core recommendations for successful security sector reform were identified during the meeting:

- Security sector reform must entail democratic reform
- Security sector reform programmes must ensure national ownership
- Security sector reform processes must be inclusive and participatory
- Security sector reform must be a people-centred process, which takes place at the local as well as the national level.